



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

Clerk and Chief Executive

Ref: 2024/00350-0004.107
Mrs Oly Carlson MLA
Chair of the Legislative Scrutiny Committee
GPO Box 3721
DARWIN NT 0801

Dear Madam Chair

**Legislative Scrutiny Committee Report – *Inquiry into the Sentencing
Amendment (Murder) Bill 2026***

Please see attached correspondence received from the Hon Marie-Clare Boothby MLA, Attorney-General regarding her response to the Legislative Scrutiny Committee's report recommendation 2 to the *Inquiry into the Sentencing Amendment (Murder) Bill 2026*.

Pursuant to Standing Order 201(3), the response is deemed to have been tabled and will be reported to the Assembly at its next meeting.

Yours sincerely

RUSSELL KEITH
Clerk

7 September 2026

Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory

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Mr Russell Keith
Clerk
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Via email: Russell.Keith@nt.gov.au

Dear Mr Keith 

I refer to the Legislative Scrutiny Committee's (the Committee) report titled 'Inquiry into the Sentencing Amendment (Murder) Bill 2026' (the Report) tabled with the Speaker in the Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory on 4 March 2026.

Recommendation 2 of the Report recommends that I request the Law Reform Committee to conduct a review of the operation of section 53A(7) and other relevant sections of the *Sentencing Act 1995* that relate to the use of 'good character' in sentencing and make any recommendations for reform that it considers appropriate.

In accordance with Standing Order 201 'Government Responses to Committee Reports', I provide the following report to the Legislative Assembly on what action, if any, the NT Government proposes to take in relation to the recommendation by the Committee.

The New South Wales Sentencing Council has reported on the issue of good character at sentencing and the recommendation to abolish good character as a mitigating factor in sentencing was accepted by the NSW Government. This report of the NSW Sentencing Council was also noted by Mrs Oly Carlson MLA, Committee Chair, in tabling the report in the Legislative Assembly.

The NSW Government subsequently enacted the *Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Amendment (Good Character at Sentencing) Act 2026* to remove good character as a mitigating factor in sentencing in response to the recommendation. I note Western Australia has also passed reforms amending the use of good character in sentencing. Reforms to remove good character as a mitigating factor in sentencing have advanced significantly across Australian jurisdictions as part of victims focussed measures.

I have spoken of the NT Government's reforms as a multi-year effort to modernise the justice system, put victims first and strengthen protections against crime and domestic violence. This work continues, and as such, looking to the advancement of reforms across Australia, it is not intended to refer the question of good character to the Law Reform Committee.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Boothby', with a stylized flourish at the end.

MARIE-CLARE BOOTHBY

- 3 SEP 2026